

Executive's Email

A weekly update from County Executive Scott Walker

Friday, July 7, 2006

*Milwaukee County is facing some serious challenges, but I say with great challenges come great opportunities. This newsletter will highlight some of those challenges and also some of the positive things happening around the county. Thank you for your continued support. **Scott***

Events

Operation Freedom 2006 was a huge success last week at the Milwaukee County Zoo. Over 18,000 people came to the zoo on Sunday. Families enjoyed a picnic, a program, including a fantastic performance by the United States Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon, and admission to the zoo. This was all free to active and veteran members of the armed forces and their families. Our thanks to all our sponsors who made this possible. No tax dollars were used for this event. Charlie Sykes, Jeff Wagner and Jessica McBride of WTMJ radio were the cohosts. Jeff Wagner had an excellent post on his weblog. You can read it here:

http://www.620wtmj.com/_content/talk/jeffwagner/index.asp.

The Miller Brewing Company Giraffe Experience opens July 15 at the Milwaukee County Zoo. This new exhibit will not only give the giraffes a more natural, open space, but will also provide visitors with an eye-to-eye look at the giraffes thanks to a six-foot high platform.

Congratulations to US Bank and the Parks Department for an excellent fireworks show on July 3rd. The display lasted an hour and featured over 7,000 shells. With about half a million spectators at the lakefront to watch the fireworks, this was truly a great community event.

Issues

There was a very good column in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel this week about the county's fiscal crisis by guest columnist Rick Esenberg.

<http://www.jsonline.com/story/index.aspx?id=453648>

Milwaukee County's Transit System got a boost today when County Board Chairman Lee Holloway and I announced a proposal to ask the federal government to reallocate the \$91.5 million in federal Interstate Cost Estimate (ICE) funds to help improve Milwaukee County's existing bus transit system. The funds were originally designated to help fund a light rail system that clearly is not supported by either Mayor Barrett or me, as evidenced by both our vetoes of Milwaukee Connector proposals recently. We believe that the funds would be better used to sustain our existing bus-based transit system. If the Governor supports this proposal, we will then lobby the federal government to reallocate these funds.